ILUSTRACIJA – Rekonstrukcija izvedena na temelju izvora: Nepoznatí autor, *Detalj – Scena iz kahve*; ilustracija iz osmanskog albuma, Istanbul c. 1620. (Biblioteka Chester Beatty).

ILLUSTRATION – Reconstruction done on the basis of source: Unknown author, *Detail – Coffee house scene*; folio from an Ottoman album, Istanbul c. 1620 (Chester Beatty Library).

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Ferid MUHIĆ

BOŠNJACI I BOSNA:
studija iz filozofije politike (2)

BOSNIAKS AND BOSNIA:
A Study in the Philosophy of Politics (2)

Abstract

In the first part of this study, published in the first issue of the magazine *illuminatio/Svjetionik/Almanar*, the author briefly outlined the basic elements of the philosophy of politics characteristic of the history of modern nations in which he analysed the relations of the individual, the people, the nation and the state. The second part of this study focuses on the attitude of Bosniaks towards collective memory, which, according to the author, was brought to the threshold of amnesia under the influence of the long-term political strategy of their neighbours. The author believes that the shaken collective memory represents the most neuralgic problem and the greatest danger for the historical reintegration and homogenization of Bosniaks as an ethnicity and a nation. The author emphasizes that "Bosnian" is a territorial determinant and completely excludes the national determinant "Bosniak". Flirting with the phrase "Bosniaks/Bosnians", which is often used, is not only a denouncement of the ethnic and national affiliation of Bosniaks, but further denies their uniqueness – and thus calls into question the very existence of Bosniaks. A Bosniak is born, a Bosniak remains. A "Bosnian" becomes, a "Bosnian" ceases to be. A Bosniak living in Bosnia is also a "Bosnian". A "Bosnian" who is not a Bosniak does not become a Bosniak anywhere, not even in Bosnia. A Bosniak who does not live in Bosnia remains a Bosniak, but ceases to be a "Bosnian". The goal of substituting the historical name Bosniaks with the territorial designation "Bosnians" is obvious: Break the homogeneous core of Bosniaks by erasing awareness of their ethnic identity, name, national unity, common history, culture, language, in short – a common past, present and future. The study also recalls the difference between the modern understanding of the nation and the way in which this social phenomenon was interpreted until the middle of the 20th century. Behind the separation of the nation from the ethnicity/people, as the supposedly superior form, lies the effort to relativize the ethnicity/people, as an objective fact, to weaken the mutual ties of its members and to bring the entire population under the control of central political power – as a seemingly integrated and homogeneous whole.

Key words: *Bosniak, Bosnian, Bosniakism, Bosnianhood, people, nation, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbs, Croats.*

BOSNIAKS IN CONFLICT WITH THEIR MEMORY

The paradoxical, even unique on a global scale, the shaken collective memory arguably represents the most neuralgic problem and the greatest danger to the historical reintegration and homogenization of Bosniaks as a people and a nation. Therefore, it is necessary to consider in detail the basic contents of the current dilemmas of Bosniaks in relation to their own historical memory, which seriously threatens not only their national unity but also their future survival as a people and a nation. In the third and final part of this study, we will focus on the genesis of historical and political factors that led to the disorientation of Bosniaks regarding their historical name, their own ethnic, spiritual, cultural and state-building being – indicating the necessary steps in order for Bosniaks to re-embrace their historical name, restore an intimate emotional connection with the national being and establish an awareness of the moral obligation of each individual towards his/her people – the Bosniaks and the state of Bosnia.

1. Merging the un-mergeable: „Bosniaks/Bosnians“

The unsustainability of the “Bosniaks/Bosnians” compound, which increasingly appears as a surrogate for Bosniak national self-determination, is best illustrated by a recent example of the dispute over Goce Delčev's national identity. According to the statement of the Bulgarian representative in the European Union, who tried to reconcile Bulgaria's national aspirations with the historical truth that Goce Delčev is the capital figure of the recent history of the Macedonian people, the formula is both having the cake and eating it: "Goce Delčev is both Macedonian and Bulgarian. The Macedonian is territorial, the Bulgarian is national."

However, with this example, the Bulgarian representative in the EU once again showed that *one can have the cake only if one cannot eat it*, or rather, that it is impossible to combine national affiliation with territorial residence as synonyms, because these are simply not synonyms, but a classical oxymoron – as can be seen from the analysis that follows:

1. If he lived in Albania, Goce Delčev would be a territorial Albanian! This further means that, wherever he lived, Goce Delčev would be and remain a Bulgarian nationally.
2. According to the same logic – Albanians, Turks, Serbs, Bosniaks, who live in Macedonia, are territorially

Macedonians, although nationally they all remain what they are!

3. In this context, members of all nations living in Bosnia are, "Bosnians" or – even funnier – "Bosnians and Herzegovinians", but only as long as they live on the territory of the Bosnian State! If they lived in Austria, they would all be territorially "Austrians", in France "French", etc.

Flirting with the phrase "Bosniaks/Bosnians", which is often used, is not only a denouncement of the ethnic and national affiliation of Bosniaks, but further denies their uniqueness – and thus calls into question the very existence of Bosniaks. Ultimately, this unfortunate and clumsy determinant means only Bosniaks living in Bosnia – just as the phrase "Bosniaks/Austrians" would refer to Bosniaks living in Austria.

Who is a "Bosniak"? A member of the ethnos, people, nation of "Bosniaks". The completely unnecessary designation "Bosnians" directly eliminates this specific ethnic, national, national, cultural context of the term "Bosniaks", because it defines the inhabitants covered by this term strictly territorially – without any other characteristics and actually refers to all citizens living in Bosnia. Formally and logically, this determinant is reduced to a tautological statement: "All people living in Bosnia are Bosnians!"

Like any other territorial determinant, this one does not specify the national affiliation of "Bosniaks", but by adding "Bosnians" actually annuls it and completely excludes it. If it is a formal-logical tautology, the determinant "Bosnian" is empty in content.

Who is a "Bosnian"? Everyone and no one! On the same basis, Serbs, Croats – as well as all others living in Bosnia – can be labelled as "Serbs, Croats ... / Bosnians", but their national affiliation is not differentiated from Serbs, Croats ... / "Austrians" or from Serbs, Croats ... who live on the territory of any other state – including Serbs living in Serbia, Croats in Croatia ...! It is even worse and more pernicious to insist that the national designation "Bosniaks" be completely replaced by the territorial designation "Bosnians". The omission of the traditional ethnic and national name "Bosniaks" establishes direct, formal and logical, total denationalization of the category "Bosniaks", which in the quickest manner and irreversibly leads to the abolition of Bosnian as the national language of Bosniaks, national history as the history of Bosniaks and national culture as Bosniak culture.

One is born Bosniak, one remains Bosniak. One becomes "Bosnian", one ceases to be "Bosnian". A Bosniak living in Bosnia is also a "Bosnian". A "Bosnian" who is not a Bosniak does not become a Bosniak anywhere, not even in Bosnia. A Bosniak who does not live in Bosnia remains a Bosniak, but ceases to be a "Bosnian".

Those who publicly, to their shame and to the detriment of the national affirmation and the vital interests of Bosniaks, advocate the need for Bosniaks to renounce their original ethnic name and to push their spiritual and cultural characteristics into the background, claim that Bosniaks will only then be able to take the "highway to development", which allegedly is a modern trend dominant in the EU and in the world. According to them, for which they offer no argument, the mentioned "highway to development" requires a radical abandonment of the model of nation-states – with the abolition of the basic ethnic, spiritual and cultural characteristics of the most numerous people. The conclusion is clear: if they want to get involved in the current processes of modern civil

society, Bosniaks must first get out of their ethnic, cultural and spiritual "den", or rather, they must renounce their Bosniakism and all remnants of their past, they must get rid of every thought of their ethnicity – as well as their cultural and spiritual specificity. The simplest and best way to achieve this is to change their name and call themselves "Bosnians" instead of "Bosniaks" and replace their Bosniakism with "Bosnianhood".

All those who are confused by the fact that it is difficult to find a satisfactory formulation that will include all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, given the complexity of the name of this country, should be reminded of two points:

1. The same problem occurs in many countries with complex names. For example, how to include in one name all the inhabitants of the state "Ivory Coast"; "Cote d'Ivoire" – "Ivory Coast"? Or, after all, "Ivorycoastans?" Or rather, using the French or English name, fall into even greater nonsense!
2. The solution is quite simple, elegant and is used everywhere except in Bosnia and Herzegovina – under the influence of proponents of erasing the national name "Bosniaks". If you want to congratulate the national holiday to all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, instead of a logically unsustainable coin addressed to "all Bosniaks/Bosnians"; instead of the equally logically unsustainable and at the same time twisted construction: "To all Bosnians and Herzegovinians", it is enough to say: "Happy holiday to all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina"! And there stands a peaceful Bosnia!

All people of the Ivory Coast congratulate the national holiday: "To all the citizens of the Ivory Coast"! – because it is their only common denominator about which there can be no dispute! However, this fact in no way excludes the truth that the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, or any other state, differ from each other in their ethnic – national affiliation, i.e. that they do not cease to be Bosniaks, Serbs, Croats – members of all other nationalities living in this state. The absurd effort to find a single name that will encompass all these nationalities at the same time reveals once again the tendency to erase only Bosniaks, because in no context is the existence of any other people in Bosnia and Herzegovina questioned!

2. Misconceptions about the "highway to development"

Even if it were true, as the proponents of the imperative claim for it to be without a single piece of evidence, that Bosniaks follow the "highway to development", i.e. that the EU and the modern world reject the **national** and force a **civic**, national, linguistic, ethnic and culturally undefined alliance of states, any reasonable man would have to ask himself how much such a state would qualify in specific circumstances, instead of immediately copying what others are doing! To them we say: even if it were so – and it is not!

Namely, in reality we see that what they call the "highway to development" is a common misconception,

because everywhere in the world the affirmation of the national – the ethnic, cultural, linguistic specificity of each state is intensively forced. In the first place, the EU is a classic example of a community of nation-states, each of which puts its national interests in the forefront – giving priority to the affirmation of its own ethnic, spiritual, cultural, in short – national characteristics! In addition, within many EU Member States, separatist processes, based on a demand for recognition of national rights, have not abated. The United Kingdom (UK) recently faced a referendum on the secession of Scotland, in which Scotland failed to achieve its own nation-state by a small number of votes, and a new referendum is already raging with even greater fervour. Catalonia voted overwhelmingly in a referendum on its own nation-state and secession from Spain, but the Constitutional Court overturned that decision. The Basque Country has been working on its independence for a century. The Walloons and the Flemish are continuously on the very brink of dividing Belgium into two nation-states. Corsica is intensifying its separatist project to secede from France. The Czech Republic and Slovakia, which have long been verbally united as "Czechoslovak" – "Czechoslovakia", with all the cultural and linguistic closeness and common history, could hardly wait for the first opportunity to separate and create their own separate nation states. The Baltic republics have split into three separate states although their peoples are also culturally, linguistically and historically very close to each other. After Serbia's failed plan to submit for the most part to its national hegemony, the former SFR Yugoslavia was transformed into six nation-states – with even Montenegro seceding from Serbia precisely according to the national key, despite the Njegoševian and Greater Serbia traditional story of Serbs and Montenegrins being *the two eyes in one head*! The seventh is on the horizon – Kosovo, while Bosnia and Herzegovina is divided into the Federation – which is again nationally organized as Bosniak-Croat, and the Republika Srpska, which already declares practically half of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina exclusively "Serbian" in its name!

The tendency to mark the state as a primarily national creation is particularly sharply emphasized in the case of the United States of America (USA). Although the population of this country is ethnically, culturally, racially, linguistically and historically by far the most mixed of all countries in the world, although virtually all of its citizens are newcomers from all parts of Europe, Africa and Asia, with a very short common history – 100 years ago, USA had a population of 76.1 million and today has a population of 331 million, which means that 4/5, or over 250 million inhabitants, came in the last 100 years – so that respecting sociological criteria, it is practically impossible to talk about the existence of any minimally homogeneous Nations – the phrase "American Nation" is firmly established as a label for this demographic conglomerate. It should be borne in mind that the United States of America, without a legal basis, insists on the term "American nation" because there is no state of "America" nor did it ever exist! Namely, since there is no state of "America", in this case one cannot justifiably refer to any of the ruling definitions of the nation.

As a reminder, in the territory of North, Central and South America there are 22 states, none of which are called America!

LIBERTÉ

Bošnjak
Boşnak
Bošniak
Bosnyák
Boshnjak
Бошняк
Bosniacque
Bosnio
ბოსნიელი
βοσνιακός
ボスニアック
БОСНЯК
波尼亚克
Bosniërs
Бошњак
Bosniaco
İsriBoşniak
Боснійський

The monopolistic usurpation of the noun "America" as the name of the state and the attribute "American", as familiar and acceptable as it sounds to us, is essentially a flagrant violation of legal norms and a direct violence against the facts! It was established only because of the enormous authority of the power of the state of the USA and the lackey, patronizing mentality of the condescending members of other states in the world. The author of these lines caused consternation when, after being presented with the "American Ambassador" at an official meeting, he kindly pointed out that H.E. is actually the "Ambassador of the USA" and not an "American Ambassador" – as a reminder that "America" is not a state. The correction was, after a moment of confusion, accepted with a smile. Truth be told, since there is a state of the USA and not a state of "America", it is officially stated everywhere without exception that it is the "President of USA", "US Army", "US Embassy", "The People of USA"... Of course, there is also only the "Ambassador of Serbia", but not the "Serbian ambassador", as there is the border of Croatia, but not the Croatian border, etc.

3. Political manipulations: sport and national (dis)integration

We have remained on this example because the generally accepted circumvention of the fact that there is no "American" state, but only the state of the USA, emphasizes the absolute priority of the national factor on the world political scene, and not some tendency to constitute a nationally indeterminate and ethnically neutral "civil state" – as the proponents of changing the national name and culture of Bosniaks and accepting the strictly territorial determinant "Bosnians" unjustifiably claim. All over the world, a project of strong homogenization of the population based on real or imaginary factors such as common values, common past, current interests in the present and future goals is obviously at work, even where the existence of such common constitutive factors is at least questionable! This is especially evident from the fact that in defining a nation, the absence of a real integrated nation is compensated for and replaced by the emotional connection of the citizens. This is clearly pointed out by Robert Bellah, in the brilliant study "Are Americans Still Citizens?", with the following example:

„Therefore, millions of Americans can identify with American athletes at the Olympics, chanting 'USA, USA!', but when it comes to topics that emotionally separate and bring us into opposition, this is where most Americans see conflict and power.”¹ The author explains how, regardless of the absence of common ethnic, racial and cultural factors that would connect them, under the influence of emotional connection, at the Olympics, US athletes are perceived as their common "American athletes" and the USA as a common state, while this feeling is often lost in everyday life!! However, it is obvious that Bellah himself uses the term "Americans", "American nation", ignoring

¹ Bellah, N., Robert: *Are Americans still Citizens?*, in: *Citizenship Critical Concepts*, Edited by Bryan S. Turner and Peter Hamilton, Volume II, Routledge, London and New York, 1994., p. 265.

the fact that formally there is no state called “America” and that, therefore, there can be no question of any “American nation”. Despite this, the example itself precisely emphasizes the basic tendency of modern states to in every way favour the concept of the nation as an integrated, homogenized demographic fact – at the expense of their territorial and thus content-empty definition.

From this perspective, it becomes more than clear why not a single Bosniak athlete, as far as I know, is called a “Bosniak”, but rather the opposite: nationality is ignored and diluted in the territorial determinant: “athlete of Bosnia and Herzegovina”, or “Bosnian representative”. Emphasizing the national affiliation of “Bosniak athletes” would contribute to the emotional rapprochement and national homogenization of Bosniaks, which is to be avoided at all costs, because it is contrary to the strategy of denying the existence of Bosniaks, which is why, persistently and at all levels, there is an insistence on keeping the national name silent and covering up the nationality of every Bosniak athlete, without exception! At the same time, by emphasizing the national affiliation of their athletes, all other countries strive to strengthen national integration.

How far this goes can be seen from the fact that, no matter what country they play for, no matter what sport Bosniak athletes play, they are never “Bosniaks” for the commentators! It is not Edin Džeko, even when he plays at the Bilino polje stadium in Zenica, nor Damir Džumhur, no matter where he plays, nor Amel Tuka, wherever he runs! Quite the opposite, athletes from Serbia and Croatia are, for all commentators, always and without exception, “Serbian football players”, “Croatian athletes”, etc. This is far from the end of the story. If you type: “Serbian athletes”, “Croatian athletes”, “Slovenian athletes”, “Montenegrin athletes”, a site with the names of athletes from these countries from all sports will open, and the list will include many whose names unequivocally indicate that they are not ethnic or Serbs – Laszlo Gjere, Erwin Katona ... – to mention only these two names, neither of whom are Croats, nor Slovenes, nor Montenegrins – including a large number of athletes who, according to the same criteria, are ethnically obviously Bosniaks! Officially, however, they are all Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Montenegrins, because they are classified as “Serbian”, “Croatian”, “Slovenian”, “Montenegrin” athletes, and not as “athletes of Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Montenegro”.

However, when you type in “Bosniak athletes”, there is no trace or voice from Bosniaks. Instead, the site “Bosnian athletes”, or “Athletes of Bosnia and Herzegovina” will open! The example of the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Bosnia and Herzegovina – as an official scientific institution of this rank in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as opposed to the strictly nationally defined Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Slovenia, Montenegro, etc., with a vigorous refusal by BiH state institutions to recognize the nationally profiled Bosniak Academy of Sciences and Arts is recognized – clearly confirms that this is a plan for the total eradication of Bosniaks as a nation and Bosniakism as a national program.

4. The people – *conditio sine qua non* of every country

The systematic insistence that the population of each state be integrated into the people by all means and in all spheres of life has its full justification in the fact that the people, emotionally and rationally connected by common interests and life contents, and not a mass of people who have only an abstract determinant – makes a state! The state is the frame of the picture, the people are the character from the picture! A living, real character who makes both the state a living and real fact, not a political blueprint that imitates the state. The people are the foundation of the state, not the state of the people! Opponents of the living and real state of Bosnia know this well, because throughout history, it has based its existence on Bosniaks as a people and not on mere “population” and “citizens” pushed into the same state by political agreements.

A nation can do without its own state, a state cannot do without its own people! The Jews persevered as a people for 2000 year, even though they were without a state during that period. Bosniaks have survived for centuries without their state – as have many other peoples who still live without their state. That connection of the people with the territory to which they gave their name, was the crowning argument in allocating the territory of Palestine to the Jews, because that territory was once called Judea – precisely after the Jews! Bosniaks did not share the fate of the Jews, embodied in the cultural myth of the “wandering Ahasphere”, did not leave the territory in which they lived and have lived since they began their existence as a people, *in the days of yore*, although a considerable number, under fierce pressure and persecution, had to emigrate from their Bosnia. Here we should remind ourselves of a fact of cardinal importance: Bosnia was also named after the autochthonous Bosniak people, and not the other way around! This is an important moment in determining the status of a specific population and its right to a certain territory! Indigenous peoples give their name to the territory; newcomers gain their name by citizenship of a territory – state! That is why many peoples – Serbs, Croats, named the territories they moved to after their own name – “Serbia”, “Croatia” in order to gain the right of priority and the status of an autochthonous people. The same motive for usurping the status and rights of the indigenous people and falsifying the facts was a key factor in insisting that the part of Bosnia allotted to the Serbs by the Dayton Accords be called the scandalous name “Republika Srpska”, which immediately, in the name itself, ostentatiously emphasizes another territory, although it is a historically indisputable truth that it is the territory of Bosnia, named after its indigenous people – Bosniaks!

5. Bosniaks in the strategic plans of international politics in the Balkans

In this context, it also becomes clear why the Republic of Macedonia was forced, at the request of Greece, to change its name and to conclude such a Treaty of Friendship with Bulgaria. The national name “Macedonians” was deleted and replaced with the term “citizenship” – citizenship / Macedonian, which specifically means that Macedonians as a people are denominated and reduced to nameless inhabitants of the state called

"Republic of Northern Macedonia". Both of these treaties include the explicit renunciation of the Macedonians of their own history, so that until the 7th century AD it is in the records as Hellenic, and from the VII century AD as common with the Bulgarians, therefore, *in sensu stricto*, as Bulgaria! Thus, this seemingly irrational and meaningless political game, which lasted for a full 30 years, was demystified and shown in the right light – as a perfidious strategy of international factors in the Balkans aimed at abolishing the legal status of Macedonians as a people. By declaring it an “artificial creation created by Tito in 1944”, only the adjective “Macedonian citizenship” remained for the Macedonians from the national name; Macedonian was abolished as a language and degraded to “the western dialect of the Bulgarian language, written in Serbian typewriter”; by depriving them of their own national history by these agreements, the Macedonians, as a people, were uprooted and thus *obezpočveni*.²

The basic political goal of this perfidious marathon game was practically achieved and what was sought was achieved: Macedonia without Macedonians as a people. Under such strong spotlights of the example of Macedonia, it is difficult not to see that the same scenario is underway in Bosnia to get Bosnia without Bosniaks as a people! Any reluctance, hesitation and the slightest shrinking away from the affirmation and emphasizing of the noun “Bosniak/Bosniaks”, i.e. the adjective “Bosniak”, and especially the acceptance of the phrase “Bosnians/Bosnians and Herzegovinians”, or “Bosnian/Bosnian and Herzegovinian”, rapidly leads to a Bosnia without Bosniaks.

Could all this be a coincidence!? More precisely, can anyone be so naïve or blind, and believe that it is a coincidence!? On the one hand, we see that the deletion of the category “Bosniak/Bosniaks” is a systematic project, which covers all areas of social life, and on the other we see that the categories “Serbian/Serbs”, “Croatian/Croats” are being intensively affirmed. The philosophy of this complementary project, with the complete exclusion of the category “Bosniak/Bosniaks”, and the equally rigorously binding emphasis on the categories “Serbian/Serbs” or “Croatian/Croats”, is based on the belief that national integration and homogenization of Serbs, i.e. Croats, the primary task and key condition for the survival and progress of Serbia and Croatia. The complementary moment of this project is derived from the logically obvious view that ignoring and denying the existence of Bosniaks will accelerate internal disintegration and prevent their national integration and homogenization, thus facilitating the realization of the ultimate goal: Bosnia without Bosniaks as a people.

However, many Bosniaks are still reluctant to use or completely avoid declaring themselves ethnically and nationally as Bosniaks!? And while the philosophy of maximum affirmation of the national character at the expense of the territorial, i.e. state, is the foundation of action of practically all countries of the world!? All the world media, especially television, report on what the “Chinese” president, “German” chancellor, “Russian” foreign minister said, what is happening with migrants on the “Croatian” border, which country was visited by the

² An expression by Lav Šestov, meaning „left without their soil”, thereby breaking the link between plants and the history from which nutrients and minerals are extracted; for humans this soil is precisely memory, memories, and for peoples it is collective history. See: Šestov, Lav: *Dostoevsky and Nietzsche: The Philosophy of Tragedy*, Slovo Ljubve, 1979, p. 27, et passim.

“Serbian” prime minister. The only exception among all countries is Bosnia. Its media are trying to totally disavow and erase the national identity of their most numerous people at every step – by replacing it with a territorial determinant as a surrogate. At the same time, one circle of Bosniaks denies or does not mention the national, ethnic, cultural, linguistic uniqueness of Bosniaks – bringing them all under the empty territorial determinant “Bosnians” as their common denominator. To make things even more serious, it should be borne in mind that they do not do it out of ignorance, but intentionally and, what is worst, by all accounts – by task!

Because, by calling on Bosniaks to give up their own ethnic name, their spiritual heritage, their culture, in the name of the alleged “highway to development”, they are actually trying to divert and distract Bosniaks from the highway to development whereby the whole modern world is moving forward, and towards which, within the context of Bosnia Serbs and Croats are going especially strong! This is not accidental, this is their ultimate goal, by forcing their own nationalism to the maximum, they want to abolish the original ethnic and national name “Bosniaks”, and thus Bosniaks as a people, delete their language from the list of world languages, in short – remove all traces of their history, culture, spirituality, in order to prepare the ground for a Bosnia without Bosniaks and turn it into a Bosnia of phantom “Bosnians”, and very real Serbs and Croats!

6. Nation theory: *Sociology as ancilla politicae*

Preserved to this day, the *Ancilla theologiae* coin reminds us of a time when philosophy operated under the watchful eye of the church as the *maid of theology*. Although not in circulation, the *Ancilla politicae* coin could rightly be applied to sociology from its inception as a science to the present day. Although not the only science subordinated to politics, sociology is more than any other science openly subordinated to the dictates of politics as its maid.

Nation theory occupies a significant place in sociology, which, by the nature of things, means that this sector of sociological research has been and remains under the strongest influence of both daily politics and its long-term strategic interests. Violence against the demographic sphere, which, by its nature, precedes the emergence of organized political power and exists, *in ultima linea*, independently of political institutions as a whole, comes to light at the first step of defining the term “nation”, i.e. defining its content.

Instead of being treated as a precondition and condition of politics, a nation is understood as a political creation, as a *consequence* of some political decision and its instrument. The notion of nation is related to the Latin terms *nacio, nasci, natus* – meaning, to give birth, to be born – while etymologically referring to gender, common ethnic, genetic origin, in political practice the notion of nation completely erases this key element of the definition! Therefore, this example also shows how the nation, as a real demographic fact, from the very beginning gained a pronounced political connotation, so it is treated as a subject of political sociology, i.e. political science.

Omaž Bošnjaku Mersadu BERBERU

ILLUSTRATION - Mehmed A. Akšamija, *Homage to Bosniak Mersad Berber*.

The beginning of the total domination of politics over the entire social life, characteristic of the end of the 18th and especially during the 19th century, is taken as the beginning of the emergence of nations – with the introduction of the term "political nation". One gets the impression that politics is a necessary and sufficient condition for the existence of a nation, although it is clear that this relationship is just the opposite.

At this point, we will emphasize two key points that independent sociological research on the theory of nation and nationalism is realistically facing. It is, first of all, about *the fact that modern nationalism* is planned, stimulated and generated primarily from the centres of political power, so that its basic initiator is neither spontaneous nor immanent to the people, i.e. the nation. Under the pretext of protecting and affirming the real and immediate needs of the people, that is, the nation, the centres of political power actually defend their own status and realize their political goals. To that extent, it is shown that nationalism as a political phenomenon originates outside the nation itself, that it is a derivative, an effect derived from the supranational system of political power which it manipulates in its own interest. The second point is the fact of the connection, the complementarity of nationalisms – they encourage and feed each other. The quasi-scientific sociological theory of the alleged *domino effect* was formulated with the aim of introducing an explicit paradigm into the field of social sciences that functions strictly in the field of natural, exact sciences – in order to impose a thesis on some necessary, causal connection of social phenomena. As such, it is not appropriate for the interpretation of social events, which never necessarily take place, but are determined by the goals and motives of stakeholders! In reality, the alleged *domino effect* is in fact a sequence of events planned in political centres of power, which with this formulation seek to conceal their own role and portray events as an inevitable sequence of causes and effects. These two points are crucial for an independent, scientifically based theory of nation and nationalism viewed from a macro perspective that is deliberately marginalized in virtually all contemporary theories of nation and nationalism.

Therefore, we will not deal here with different definitions and theories of the nation, but we will only recall the dramatic difference between the modern understanding of the nation and the way in which this social phenomenon was interpreted until the middle of the 20th century. Behind the separation of the nation from the people, as its supposedly superior form, lies the effort to relativize the people, as an objective fact, to weaken the mutual ties of its members and to bring the entire population under the control of central political power as a seemingly integrated and homogeneous whole. Yet these differences cannot be erased and remain clearly marked in all societies today.³

In this context, from the perspective of modern theories of the nation, Lenin's insistence on the right of all nations to self-determination sounds more anachronistic, arguably, with strictly historical and sociological

³ National movements in many EU member states, racial and ethnic conflicts in the USA, India, Myanmar, China, as well as many other countries, the dramaturgy of the disintegration of SFR Yugoslavia and the formation of nation states on its ruins, illustrate this claim enough.

criteria, by the policy of Great Russian nationalism as repression of national rights.⁴ Almost equally anachronistic seems the basic definition of a nation accepted by all leading sociologists and political theorists until the 1970s, regardless of their ideological affiliation.⁵ We list it in its standard formulation with all the essential factors:

1. A nation is based on a people;
2. Traditionally lives in a common territory;
3. Speak a common language;
4. Possesses a high degree of ethnic affinity;
5. It is connected by common spiritual ideals and cultural values;
6. Forms or seeks to form a nation-state.

To be complete, to this descriptive definition, which includes all the essential objective components of the nation, the author considers it necessary to add the subjective:

7. The feeling of belonging to one's own nation – people, ethnicity and awareness of the moral obligation of loyalty.

As much as it insisted on a descriptive approach and a deterministic method based on the principle of causality, sociology must not forget that its real subject is man. People's actions are never determined causally, but also arise from a rational assessment of suitability to achieve a certain goal and from emotional attachment and awareness of moral obligation – either to a particular person or to the community with which a person identifies as a member. Without these two factors, all social phenomena remain at the level of description, statistics and quantification. The phenomenon of the nation is absolutely inexplicable and incomprehensible if it is viewed as an object among objects, and not in its real living whole as an area of action of the motives and goals of real people.

8. The temptations of individualism and the entropy of the nation: the example of Bosniaks

The problem of individualism, atomization, cutting off from the common past, ignoring one's own collective affiliation, ethnic and cultural peculiarities, replacing Bosniak with “Bosnianhood” accelerates our ethnic erosion and intensifies the processes of collective self-destruction of Bosniak being – with the danger of the definitive

⁴ National movements in many EU member states, racial and ethnic conflicts in the USA, India, Myanmar, China, as well as many other countries, the dramaturgy of the disintegration of SFR Yugoslavia and the formation of nation states on its ruins, illustrate this claim enough.

⁵ Lenin, V. I.: *On the Right of Nations to Self-Determination*, 1914.

entropy of the Bosniak nation. While Robert N. Bellah asks "Are the people of the USA still citizens?" in the context of the tradition of individualism and the absence of common ethnic, cultural and historical factors,⁶ by systematically suppressing a common cultural and spiritual affiliation and forgetting their ethnic kinship, common historical experience and territorial unity continuously since time immemorial, Bosniaks face the question: "Will they ever become citizens of Bosnia?" If they condition this status by a complete renunciation of their historical name, culture, spirituality and tradition of statehood, so to say, they will never, not even – then!

The goal of replacing the historical name Bosniaks with the territorial designation "Bosnians" is obvious: To break the homogeneous core of Bosniaks by erasing awareness of their ethnic identity, name, national unity, common history, culture, language, in short – common past, present and future.

There are serious indications that this goal has been achieved for a long time and that, to a large extent, it has already taken root among some Bosniaks. Atomization, that is, breaking the awareness of the collective, common belonging of Bosniaks, forcing individualism to the detriment of ethnic solidarity, has long been perceived as the main danger for the formation of civic consciousness. In his work *Democracy in America*, Alexis de Tocqueville, notes that the pronounced individualism present in the United States is potentially the greatest threat to the development of a democratic civil society.⁷ Commenting that "... 'Individualism' is a word recently coined to express a new idea. Our fathers only new about egoism. Individualism is more moderate and orderly than egoism, but in the end its results are much the same," Tocqueville writes, "Individualism is a calm and considered feeling which disposes each citizen to isolate himself from the mass of his fellows and withdraw into the circle of family and friends; with this little society formed to his taste, he gladly leaves the greater society to look out for itself."⁸

Separated like this, people begin to believe that they owe nothing to anyone and stop expecting anything from others – imagining that they are holding their destiny in their own hands. "*Finally, each person comes to forget their ancestors, and also their contemporaries*", Tocqueville continues. "Each man is forever thrown back on himself alone, and there is a danger that he may be shut up in the solitude of his own heart."⁹

De Tocqueville saw this tendency towards isolation, separation from society, and individualism as a serious threat to the freedom of citizens. Indeed, despotic regimes have always hindered people from engaging in social activities – as well as from organizing mass gatherings and socializing with each other – leading them to some kind of isolation from others. With the dramatic weakening of the role of the family, traditionally the most powerful factor in the formation of personality – such as has been at work for a century and which at the time de Tocqueville writes was not even on the horizon, the problem of losing interest in society and losing psychological contact with the community more serious and especially strongly endangers the moral, spiritual and cultural connection

⁶ Bellah, N., Robert: *Are Americans still Citizens?*, in: *Citizenship Critical Concepts*, pp. 261-267.

⁷ De Tocqueville, Alexis: *Democracy in America*, Garden City, N. Z., Doubleday Anchor, 1969.

⁸ Ibid., p. 506.

⁹ Ibid., p. 508.

of man with his own community. Relying on the healing power of the family, de Tocqueville emphasizes the role of women – especially mothers – who, through their traditional commitment to religious values, can effectively alleviate overemphasized individualism by raising children in a spirit of morality that transcends selfishness and narrow personal interests.¹⁰

To understand the magnitude of the danger that leaving one's homeland would bring to Bosniaks, a brilliant analysis of the social consequences of individualism is especially relevant, even in conditions of pronounced economic prosperity. Detecting "hyperactivity and feverish competitiveness in the midst of abundance," de Tocqueville notes the contradiction between the economic wealth of society and the absence of authentic carefreeness and joy in people: "I have seen the freest and best educated of men in circumstances the happiest to be found in the world: yet it seemed to me that a cloud habitually hung on their brow, and they seemed serious and almost sad in their pleasures because they never stop thinking of the good things they have not got. This restlessness and sadness in pursuit of the good life makes it difficult to form strong attachment between man and man, not to mention the friendship. This restless, competitive, and anxious people clutch everything and hold nothing fast."¹¹

Today, Bosniaks are exposed to the same pressures of fragmentation of social ties, but in much more unfavourable circumstances. Their economic situation is far from "the best in the world"; the family has long since lost much of its integrative power, Bosniak mothers are mostly at work, and those who have retained their role in the home and fidelity to tradition and religious principles are under pressure and even social ridicule. In addition, natural, spontaneous reference to people from one's own cultural and spiritual circle is often seen as suspicious, potentially nationalistic, retrograde, fundamentalist – even terrorist. In addition to organized political pressure and slander for Islamic terrorism,¹² Bosniaks are constantly under pressure from some members of their own people to renounce their Bosniakism and thus their authentic social personalities – personalities formed in the most intimate circle of the Bosniak family, behaviour, relationships, sounds, tastes, smells, names and everything that defines Bosniaks as a social being. and what his own social heritage is, reducing it to a small individual, "a desperate island in the middle of a torrent!"¹³ The dangers of radical individualism for social life, even when motivated by the highest philosophical and spiritual values, are clearly illustrated by the views of Ralph Waldo Emerson, a great proponent of individualism and one of the most refined and profound representatives of transcendentalism. Pleading for the praise of individualism from the position of feeling mystical unity with the Universal Being, Emerson consistently accepts the outcome of complete

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 291.

¹¹ Ibid., pp. 535-538, 565.

¹² A malicious chase based on the slander of "10,000 Islamic terrorists on the territory of BiH", launched in 2019 by Kolinda Grabar Kitarović, President of Croatia (2015-2020), and the Minister of the Interior of Austria, caused great damage to Bosnia, especially Bosniaks, against whom it was directed, but the slanderers went unpunished.

¹³ A replica from Ernest Hemingway's book: *Islands in the Stream*.

separation, isolation from all people, forgetting the essential dependence of the individual on others as well as others: "In such moments, the name of nearest friend, sounds than foreign and accidental; to be brothers, to be acquaintances, – master or servant, is then a trifle and disturbance."¹⁴

Every gesture of helping another, in whatever trouble he is, is to the detriment of the individual and violates his freedom: "A sympathetic person is placed in the dilemma of a swimmer among drowning men, who all catch at him, and if he gives so much as a leg or a finger, they will drown him."¹⁵

De Tocqueville's warning that individualism "cuts man off from his past" is promoted by Emerson as one of the greatest advantages and capital values of the individual: "We need to desert the tradition because the perpetual admonition of Nature to us, is, 'The world is new, untried. Do not believe the past, I give you the Universe a virgin to-day!'"¹⁶

And Nietzsche says that he decided to 'cut himself off from everyone and everything, like scissors' and that 'all our troubles come from the fact that we cannot be alone'¹⁷, and Jean-Paul Sartre emphatically in the title of his play claims: "Hell is other people!"¹⁸, but cutting themselves off from everything and everyone and running away from others as if from hell, and even that world without a past, is a virgin universe that is offered today, rare and eccentric specialties on the table of rare philosophers. In reality, they, like all of us, eat and live from the bread of our everyday life, and that bread is our past, it is life with people, it is the other people!

On the other hand, these praises of individualism, of closing one's own heart to solitude, remained, however, in the plane of attitude towards the phenomenon of sociability as such. Neither Emerson, nor Nietzsche, nor Sartre touched the intimate social background of a person formed by memories, what builds and grows our past that is written in our consciousness and engraved in the features of our face. However, those who persuade Bosniaks to renounce their Bosniakism in the name of no one and everyone's "Bosnianhood", asking them to cut themselves off from their ethnic name and national spiritual being, are floating through murky Bosnia like Emerson's individuals among the drowned, quarrelling with their memory. offering them a lifeline instead, a Sartre aphorism modified into the suicidal madness of Bosniak self-denial:

„Hell, is Bosniaks!"

¹⁴ Emerson, Ralph, Waldo: *Essays and Lectures*, in: *The Literature of United States*, by Scott, Foresman and Company, 1957., pp. 435-444.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 437.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 444.

¹⁷ Nietzsche, F.: *Lettres a Lou Salome*, Mai 11, 1879.

¹⁸ *L'infer, c'est les autres*, the original title of the play was published in 1944, later renamed *No Exit*.

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